

## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF BERKELEY

**The work of the church is to create loving community,  
inspire spiritual growth, and encourage lives of integrity, joy, and service.**

### **Report to the Board of Trustees**

**Coordinating Team**

**September 16, 2007**

### **WORSHIP**

This is a glorious time to be a Unitarian Universalist in the San Francisco Bay Area! The first-ever of its kind marketing campaign involving 17 congregations is beginning now. Company is coming! We hope the congregation will welcome many guests and offer them warm hospitality and inspiring worship. We want to share our UU faith.

Able-bodied members are invited to park in parking spots furthest from the building, down the driveways, and in the additional unpaved parking area near the Lawson Road entrance, to offer a welcoming place to park for visitors and those with mobility limitations. Members are encouraged to carpool.

In this report last September we offered plans to explore a 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Service. (The timeline of last year's process is attached to the end of this report.) Now this September the long-standing 10:45 service has been moved to 11:00, and in January the congregation will offer two Sunday Services one at 9:00 and one at 11:00.

The Luminescence adult choir will sing in the 11:00 service and we will seek a wide variety of music from instrumentalists and singers for the 9:00 service. We will continue the congregation's long-standing tradition of beautiful music and have budgeted an additional \$5,000 for music.

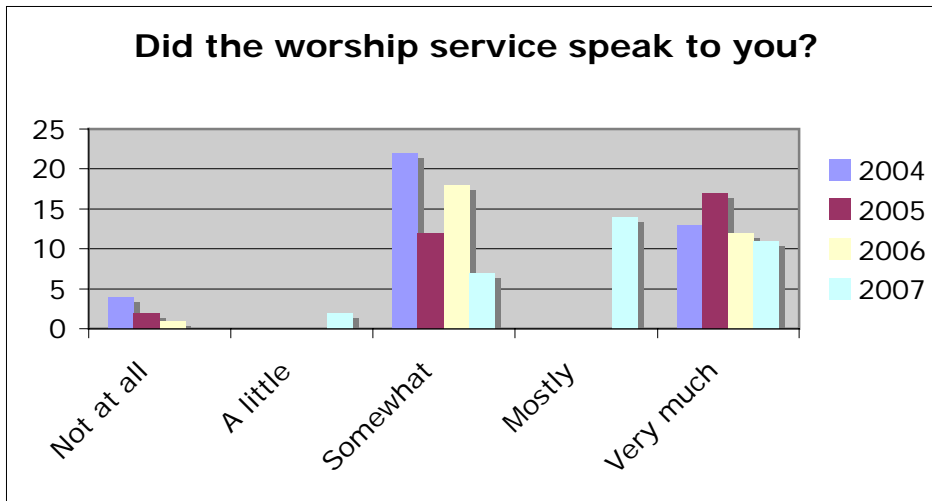
**.End Statement on Worship: UUCB celebrates the human spirit and fosters lifelong spiritual growth. We are a vibrant and joyful community where religious seekers of all ages find connection, support and spiritual growth individually and in groups.**

**Nested Ends: 1. We join together throughout the year in a growing community of faith.**

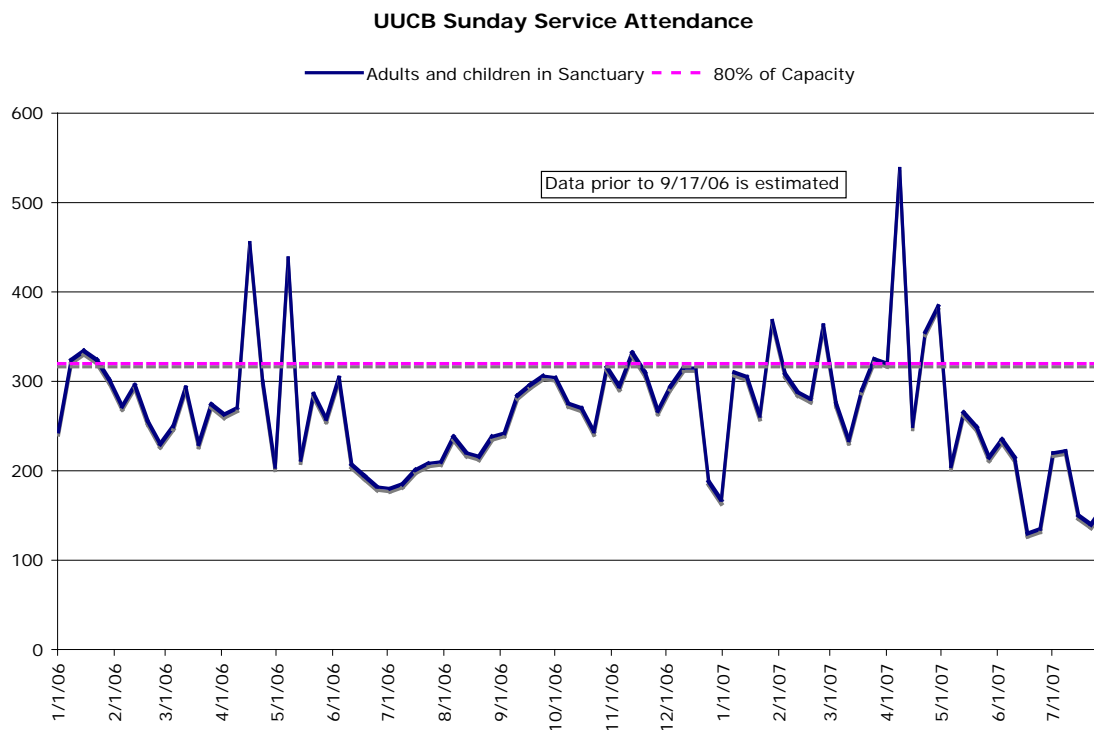
We offer inspiring Sunday morning worship 52 weeks a year, integrating music, drama, dance, ritual, sermons, opportunities for singing, "sharing our stories," stories for all ages, involvement of a youth and children's choir, and regular participation by an inspiring and accomplished adult choir.

Visitors are surveyed regarding the worship service.

The 2007 visitor survey moved from a 3 point scale to a 5 point scale this year. The average response to “did the worship service speak to you” was a very positive 4.0 on a 5.0 point scale. This survey goes to all visitors, whether or not they have returned, and had just over a 30% response rate.



Attendance



Attendance for the past year has increased slightly and averages about 270 people (adults and children prior to the start of religious education classes), but varies widely by Sunday and season of the year. The chart above shows the number of times attendance has exceeded 320 worshippers (80% of the 400 capacity), which is the point at which most church capacity experts suggest new people (and long time members) will feel uncomfortable because of difficulty in finding places for their family to sit. UUCB has been near or over capacity 14 times in the past 12 months, suggesting we may be “repelling visitors” (using the words of Rev. Peter Morales) one out of every four Sundays. Because fall through spring is typically the highest attendance, we anticipate hitting the threshold significantly more times before the implementation of the second service in January.

One of our highest attendance Sundays was Celebration Sunday, which more than doubled attendance from the year before, helped, no doubt, by the participation of the Rev. Bill Sinkford and phone calls from the canvass team to the entire congregation inviting them to attend.

We continue to announce Sunday Service themes in the monthly *Beacon on the Hill* which is sent to subscribers and available on the UUCB website.

Upcoming Sunday music is often announced in the music column in the *Beacon on the Hill*.

As in the past, additional services have been offered for significant holidays: two Christmas Eve Candlelight Services, a Thanksgiving Day Service, two Easter Sunday Services.

Sermons and services back to March 2005 are available for podcasting on the UUCB website. Printed copies of sermons are available for purchase at church, posted on the website, and sent to homebound church members.

Offer Thursday night worship, 7:00 – 7:25pm, September – May. Pianist Elinor Armer offered her music throughout the year.

Attendance for the Thursday evening worship service dropped from an average of 46 people in attendance to an average of 37.

A Chalice Circle met during the worship service, many parents with young children who stayed for dinner after Youth and Children’s Choir rehearsal, left after dinner. Some elders who came for dinner also left the building before the worship service.

This year the Rev. Jane Ramsey will take leadership of first Thursday worship, Intern Minister Jeffrey Melcher will lead second Thursdays, the Rev. Cathleen Cox Burneo will lead third Thursdays, and seminarian Sue Magidson will take the lead on fourth and fifth Thursdays.

**Nested Ends: 2. Worship services integrate dance, music, and the arts; and inspire church members. 3. Congregants experience spiritual growth through participation in worship arts.**

The ministers continue meeting with the choir just before the services for centering time together, words on hopes for the jointly shared leadership of worship.

Music/Singing/Dance are used to enhance storytelling, to accompany meditation and prayers, to connect worship elements. Rev. Christopher Holton Jablonski led a storytelling workshop in the spring.

The joint UU Choirs of Oakland, San Francisco and Berkeley, along with a percussion ensemble, came to UUCB for Music Sunday in May for the West Coast premiere of Tavener's Lament for Jerusalem.

In addition, the choir performed two concerts away from UUCB. One was the joint UU choirs at the SF church, a fund raiser for their music program, and the other was in San Mateo during the summer with Masterworks Chorale.

In 2002, there were 35 members, last year there were 55 members. The choir membership now totals 59 singers.

The Chamber Choir sang in four services, and the Gamelan Ensemble played in three. Church members have offered their musical talents during 13 Sunday Services between September and May, including bass Warren Zittel, violin Donna Lerew, clarinetist Carl Lyngholm, violist Adelaide Tolberg, flute Deborah Schmidt, flute Eve Lindi, percussionists Jim Milstead and Sandy Tremblay. Some of these musicians were involved in Summer Services as well. In addition, a Summer Choir of 30+ sang in two services.

In addition to UUCB musicians, guest (paid) musicians, harpist, trumpeters, and trombonists enhanced three services: Easter, Music Sunday, and a May service. Susan Russell, who uses our sanctuary to practice on a regular basis, sang for two services.

Patricia and Walter Ellis donated funds that will be used for needed organ repairs.

When Sandra Soderlund retired in 2006, after ten years of exemplary service, Chris Nordwall was hired as organist. His exceptional quickness in matters musical and his dry and ready wit made him a very welcome presence. He married and moved back to Portland, Oregon this past summer. The search for a new organist continues, during a time when fine organists are in ever-shorter supply, and someone will be hired by the

middle of October.

Flower arrangements for the Sunday Service are coordinated by Nan Yarborough.

During the 2006-07 church year, the music program held four events to raise funds for UUCB. Three were single day events: the Bryan Baker & Friends recital, the *Messiah Sing*, and, off-site, Sandra & Herb's Soiree. There were three performances of the *Apple Tree and Other Forbidden Fruit*, a collaboration of music and drama, directed by Bryan Baker and Donna Davis. This allowed many members and friends to have their talents in the spotlight, including members of the clergy.

Blended Voices met monthly for dramatic play reading.

This year one Music Sunday is planned, and one joint concert with Bay Area UU choirs.

Bryan Baker is offering Voice Classes and a Chamber Choir, and may add a Bell Choir, and Daniel Schmidt is leading a Gamelan Ensemble.

Luminescence Choir and the Youth and Children's Choir will continue to join voices for Sunday services, and will both be featured in the opening number of the *Messiah Sing-along* in December. The joint UU choirs of San Mateo, Berkeley, and Marin will again join in song in February.

Bryan Baker and Donna Davis will collaborate in directing another music-drama production, a three-performance event in April called *Animal Crackers* that focuses on food and humor. In addition to the musical, two other fund-raising events are planned at UUCB. In October, the Bryan Baker & Friends recital will feature, in addition to Bryan Baker, Rod Low, Donna Davis, Carl Lyngolm and Adeliade Tolberg. The music program and the new fund-raising committee will work together in December, with a High Tea preceding the *Messiah Sing-Along*.

Donna Davis is offering to direct a dramatic scene for a spring Sunday service, and Sandra Soderlund has offered to direct two dramas one for a fall and one for a spring Sunday service.

**Nested Ends: 4. Children grow spiritually through their active participation in church services.**

The Youth and Children's Choir directed by Michèle Voillequé performs often in Sunday Worship, participating in Child Blessings, the Family Christmas Eve Service and Celebration Sunday, among others.

Last year, the choir grew from a core group of 7-9 singers to a dependable 12. Sixteen children were attending rehearsals by the close of the "year," in May. Nine children attended the first full rehearsal for the current year, on September 13th. Check out the adorable picture of the choir that is in your UUCB mailboxes!

Children and youth are invited to light the chalice, to offer the Sharing the Story and to participate in leadership roles in intergenerational services. The Coming of Age youth shared their credos in a spring service marking their growth from children to youth. The youth group offered stories as skits in the early Easter service.

Children are participating in Children's Chapels regularly.

**Nested Ends: 5. Religious and spiritual paths embraced by members and friends of the congregation are affirmed and appreciated. 6. Congregants find support for spiritual practice at the church.**

Chalice Circles and many programs give people worshipful opportunities for sharing their religious and spiritual paths within a respectful circle of people with diverse beliefs.

A variety of meditation practices continue to be offered.

Church groups such as Humanist Connection, Mist Tree Moon Circle, and Devout Atheists meet regularly. A monthly UU Christian worship service is offered by the Rev. Lisa Sargent and Donna Sequeria. A UU Jewish Seder was held.

Personal Theology seminars as well as many classes and workshops are offered from a variety of perspectives and affirming many paths.

Opportunities exist for small group worship and many committees and program groups include worshipful elements in their gatherings. The Board of Trustees, Council, Coordinating Team, Membership Committee, Appreciation Circle, Caring Circle, Intern Committee, Committee on Ministry and other groups within the congregation include worshipful elements in their meetings. The Congregation, Ministers, Staff, Council, Coordinating Team, and Chalice Circles have covenants that are read regularly.

New members' orientation includes among the expectations for integrity of membership finding and establishing a regular practice that works for each person.

Respectfully submitted,  
 The Coordinating Team  
 Linda Laskowski  
 Tim Weitzel  
 Christopher Holton-Jablonski,  
 Bill Hamilton-Howay  
 Barbara Hamilton-Holway

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Service Exploration**

**1999** Congregation sets priority for growth with Vision 2005 at 800 members

### **2005**

**Feb** \*Congregation sets priority for growth with dot voting

**May** \*Congregation calls Minister of Religious Education to provide stability and vitality to life span religious education and grow the congregation with new families  
\*UU Bay Area Marketing Campaign begins plans for Bay Area media outreach

### **2006**

**Feb** Congregation sets priority for growth with dot voting

**Spring** \*Board of Trustees asks Coordinating Team to draft a long range plan for reaching the end goals established by the Board

\*Confirmation of Fall 2007 for major Bay Area Outreach

**Aug** \*Coordinating Team begins works on draft long range plan, shares draft in steps and its various versions; reports available at information table (continuing)

\*Ministers read articles on growth and adding second Sunday services

\*Ministers meet with Committee on Ministry to discuss growth and second Sunday service

**Sep** \*Committee on Ministry reads three articles on growth and second services

\*Worship Staff reads the three articles and discusses possibilities, positives and negatives of a second Sunday service at weekly meetings

\*Report to the Board of Trustees on the Worship End includes exploring a 2<sup>nd</sup> service. Copies of the report go to the Council and the Committee on Ministry and are made available on the information table

\*Chris Craethnenn discusses with RE team, teachers, families (into Oct)

**Oct** \*Worship Staff continue to discuss possibilities for additional service  
Committee on Ministry considers additional services

**Nov** \*Barbara Hamilton-Holway offers Thursday night 7:00 Worship Service homily on Exploring a 2<sup>nd</sup> Service

\*Barbara leads Thursday night 7:30 Program on Growing including Exploring a 2<sup>nd</sup> Service

**Dec** \*Worship Explorers forms with representatives from the staff, from the choir, from the Committee on Ministry, Membership Committee member, Website volunteer, Sound System lead volunteer, long time and new members to UUCB, and ministry

### **2007**

- Jan** \*Worship Explorers announced in Beacon and Orders of Service  
 \*Worship Explorers receive written and spoken feedback from members  
 Staff luncheon topic is Exploring a 2<sup>nd</sup> Service  
 \*UUCB membership drops below 500 for the first time in at least 15 years
- Feb** \*Worship Explorers host Café Conversations on Growth  
 \*Attendance information suggests we have been at or above capacity 1 out of 6 Sundays since Jan 2006.
- Mar** \*Ministers meet with ministerial colleagues to discuss growth and 2<sup>nd</sup> services  
 \* Board President, Membership Co-Chair, and Co-Ministers attend Pacific Central District Hospitality workshop and discuss exploring a 2<sup>nd</sup> service  
 \*Board President and Ministers discuss exploring a 2<sup>nd</sup> service  
 Worship Explorers draft possible versions of Sunday morning with additional worship and education possibilities  
 \*Worship Explorers plan feedback form and newsletter articles  
 \*Jean Moore, Worship Explorers, facilitator, and Chris Craethnenn visit the Council to present draft versions for discussion and feedback  
 \*Jean Moore, Worship Explorers, facilitator, and Chris Craethnenn visit the Choir to present draft versions for discussion and feedback  
 \*Chris Craethnenn, as Minister of life span Religious Education, meets with Martha Helming regarding Personal Theology and Center for Spiritual Development as connected to exploring additional worship and education on Sundays  
 \*14: Council meeting with the ministers and coordinating team on exploring 2<sup>nd</sup> service and the process of the exploration  
 \*15: Jean Moore is guest at the March Board of Trustees meeting which includes a discussion of possible 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Service  
 \*Worship Explorers offer survey in April Beacon and on Sunday mornings inviting all members and friends to check Sunday morning events each would like to attend and to receive feedback  
 \*Chris Craethnenn and Martha Helming have second meeting regarding Personal Theology
- Apr** \*Attendance information suggests we have been at or above capacity 1/3 Sundays since Sep of 2006.  
 \*12: Chris Craethnenn offers Thursday night program on exploring second service  
 \*17: Worship Explorers review surveys and feedback  
 \*19: Jean Moore from Worship Explorers meets with Board of Trustees  
 \*20: Network Gathering with additional service as one of the topics for conversation
- May** \*20 Congregation votes to have an additional Sunday Service